

Claiming:

1. An anonymous method of transaction, said method comprising:
  - providing a card of predetermined denominational value having an indicia of identification associated with said card and said value;
  - issuing said card to a consumer anonymously in exchange for payment by said consumer of said predetermined denominational value associated with said card;
  - presenting said card to a merchant as payment to said merchant for a transaction of goods or services, wherein said payment by said consumer to said merchant is less than or equal to said predetermined denominational value associated with said card;
  - verifying said card by transmitting said indicia of identification and the amount of said payment by said consumer to said merchant, from said merchant to a card issuing authority;
  - issuing an approval code from said card issuing authority to said merchant;
  - completing said transaction by said merchant providing said good or services to said merchant; and
  - transferring funds from said card issuing authority to said merchant in the amount of said payment from said consumer to said merchant.
2. The invention in accordance with claim 1 wherein said merchant has a Web site and said transaction takes place through said merchant's Web site.

3. The invention in accordance with claim 1 wherein said step of verifying said card by transmitting said indicia of identification from said merchant to a card issuing authority and said step of issuing an approval code from said card issuing authority to said merchant, further comprises first transmitting said indicia of identification and the amount of said payment from said consumer to said merchant, from said merchant to a merchant's acquiring bank and then to said card issuing authority, and then issuing an approval code from said card issuing authority to said merchant's acquiring bank and then to said merchant.

4. The invention in accordance with claim 3 wherein said step of transferring funds from said card issuing authority to said merchant in the amount of said payment from said consumer to said merchant, further comprises first transferring said payment from said consumer to said merchant to said merchant's acquiring bank and then to said merchant.

5. The invention in accordance with claim 1 further comprising the step of deducting the amount of said payment from said consumer to said merchant, from said predetermined value of said card upon issuing said approval code.